

# **RICHMOND POLICE DEPARTMENT**



11-24  
**NEGOTIATIONS TEAM  
OPERATING MANUAL**

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Chief of Police or Designee

2/18/2008

## Table of Contents

|                                       |          |
|---------------------------------------|----------|
| <b>I. Purpose.....</b>                | <b>3</b> |
| <b>II. Procedure.....</b>             | <b>3</b> |
| Command and Control                   |          |
| Utilization                           |          |
| Activation                            |          |
| Differential Response                 |          |
| <b>III. Personnel.....</b>            | <b>4</b> |
| Selection                             |          |
| <b>IV. Training.....</b>              | <b>5</b> |
| <b>V. Equipment.....</b>              | <b>6</b> |
| <b>VI. Mobile Command Center.....</b> | <b>6</b> |

## **PURPOSE**

The purpose of this manual is to establish guidelines for the Richmond Police Department negotiations team. It is the policy of the Richmond Police Department to maintain a negotiations team to enhance the safety of the community while minimizing the risks to others.

## **PROCEDURE**

### *Command and Control*

The department negotiations team is under the immediate direction of the negotiations team commander and his executive officer or their designee.

Whenever the negotiations team is activated for response to a critical incident or as a support unit on special operations, the negotiations team commander will be the on-scene supervisor while the unit is engaged in the operation. The negotiations team will be responsible for establishing and maintaining communications with the barricaded or hostage subject and will control all communications with the subject throughout the situation. The negotiations team will also disseminate any intelligence gathered to the tactical command post and to the SWAT Team.

The completion of all after action reports by negotiations team personnel will be the responsibility of the negotiations team commander. The negotiations team commander will maintain a copy of these reports.

### *UTILIZATION*

The negotiations team will be utilized in life-threatening situations that require resources or skills not provided by normal police operations. Examples of such critical incidents include, but are not limited to:

- Suicidal subjects
- High risk search warrants
- High risk warrant service
- VIP protection
- Coverage of special events
- Hostage/barricade situations
- UC operations Support

The negotiations team commander, executive officer, or designee will work jointly with all units involved in the planning stage of special operations.

### *ACTIVATION*

In the case of a critical incident (hostage situation, barricaded subject, etc.) the on-scene supervisor will notify DEC to activate the SWAT and Negotiations Teams. Any sworn supervisor can request the assistance of the Negotiations Team.

The first officer on the scene of a critical incident will:

- Immediately attempt to contain and control the situation while avoiding confrontation
- Establish a perimeter using additional backup units
- Immediately advise the on-duty shift supervisor of the situation
- Provide the Department of Emergency communications with the exact location of the incident
- Attempt to stabilize the situation pending the arrival of the SWAT and Negotiations Teams
- See to the safety of others who are in the area of the incident, including evacuations if deemed necessary

Every officer who responds to the scene of a critical incident will report to the command post for assignment. Under no circumstances will an officer deploy himself or herself without notifying the command post or on-scene supervisor.

The negotiations team commander will determine when other agencies (utility or telephone companies, etc.) need to be contacted and what assistance or support is necessary.

### *Differential Response*

When the Negotiators are requested for support of special operations such as high risk search warrants, at the discretion of the team commander or his executive Officer, it may be appropriate to utilize a smaller number of team Members.

## **PERSONNEL**

The negotiations team is allowed a maximum of 15 members. Additionally, Richmond Behavioral Health Authority may be called upon to assist the team if deemed necessary by the team commander, executive officer or their designee.

### *Selection*

Hostage negotiators are carefully screened and selected. Participation in the Negotiations Team is a voluntary process but each candidate must exhibit necessary skills and traits to serve as a member of the team. Due to the specialized nature of the negotiations process, potential

negotiators must possess good verbal skills and problem-solving abilities. Applicants must have a minimum of five years of service as a Richmond Police Officer.

Department personnel will be notified of vacancies through the Vacancy Bulletin. Officers interested in applying must follow normal Department procedures for transfer. Before being considered eligible, an applicant must successfully complete all three phases of the selection process. The selection of negotiations team personnel will be conducted through three phases:

1. Meeting minimum requirements listed in the Vacancy Bulletin
2. Three Member Panel interview – team commander, executive officer and support services major
3. Recommendation to the Chief of Police

Upon completion of the selection process, a roster will be compiled of those candidates that successfully completed all phases of testing. This roster will remain in effect for a period of one year from the date of the final selection phase. When a vacancy occurs on the negotiations team, the negotiations team commander has the option to select personnel from the existing list or, if there are less than three remaining candidates, initiate a selection process.

Officers who accept a negotiations team position are expected to be available and able to respond to callouts at any time. Negotiations team members are expected to schedule any off-call time so that the integrity of the team and its members are not endangered. If a team member will be unable to respond for call-out, he or she will notify the negotiations team commander or designee as soon as possible.

## **TRAINING**

The negotiations team will train twice monthly for a minimum of twelve hours per month. The negotiations team training sergeant will maintain all training records. Each member of the team must attend at least 100 hours of training per year in order to remain qualified as a Team member who can act as a primary negotiator (one who makes direct contact with the target of the mission). Officers who do not meet that standard may be placed on a probationary status at the discretion of the team commander. Those officers can be used in assignments on the team other than primary negotiator.

The negotiations team will engage in a joint mock mission with the Special Weapons and Tactics (SWAT) Team at least annually.

Upon transfer into the negotiations team, new negotiators will immediately begin responding to call outs and taking part in monthly training with the rest of the team. However, new team members will be used in assignments on the team other than primary negotiator.

## **EQUIPMENT**

The negotiations team maintains the following equipment:

Negotiator Phone System, including cables  
Hand held Bullhorns  
Portable PA system  
Cellular Phone  
Radio

A team member who is designated by the team commander or his executive officer will maintain the team equipment. That equipment officer will be responsible for ensuring that all equipment is regularly inspected so that it is fully functional and ready to be utilized at any callout.

## **MOBILE COMMAND CENTER**

The negotiations team maintains a mobile command center.